

SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

Official Organ of The Saint Louis Bird Club
for the Promotion of
Bird Enjoyment, Bird Study and Bird Conservation

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The February Meeting

The February meeting will have, as the main attraction, an indoor field meet. Mounted specimens will be on-hand for the meet. Winter residents of St. Louis region will be the birds seen at this meet. It will be led by Mr. Dede, with the help of other members of the club.

The meeting is planned for Wednesday, February 16, at the Nurse's Home of the Jewish Hospital, 306 South Kingshighway, at 8 P.M.

You are urged to attend and bring your friends.

Recent Experiments With "Homing" Cowbirds

Whether or not wild birds will be used someday in military operations, as carrier pigeons are, is an engaging speculation. Army men have said, unofficially, that there are possibilities in the idea. Blackbirds or Swallows, flying over military frontiers, should have a better chance of escape from enemy fire, even if suspected of carrying a message, than would the larger, more conspicuous carrier. One sees, of course, that one of the difficulties would be that birds would not be available nor possessed of the "homing" urge except for a comparative brief season.

Many amazing instances of the "homing" instinct have been recounted since the experiments with terns were made by Watson nearly 40 years ago. An outstanding performance was that of a Pintail, as recently reported in Bird Banding Notes. The bird was banded in California, March 6, 1935, shipped to Hawaii and shot in California, Dec. 4, of the same year.

When the return is made, as seems to be the case here, to a breeding locality in which it was captured, by such a strongflying bird as a duck, the thing is sufficiently remarkable. Hardly less remarkable are the journeys of Jays, Thrashers, Grackles and Redwings, shipped a thousand miles from their breeding grounds--a greater distance than their regular migration flight--which make the return in a few days.

But more remarkable, indeed, is the performance attributable to the "homing" instinct of the bird without a home" quoting W. I. Lyon. It might be supposed that a bird of the light-o'-love character or the Cowbird would have no special attachment for the scene of its late intrusion but be content to carry on its parasitic practice in a new environment. But no. The Cowbird, too, wants to go back.

Mr. Lyon has trapped Cowbirds, together with other passerine birds for many years. It was but a few years ago that he began to transport them.

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When he found that one of his Cowbirds had returned from a distance of 150 miles he began to wonder how far he could ship them in expectation of their return to his traps. In greater number, therefore, he sent them to Denver, Jacksonville, Fla., Quebec, Boston, and, lately, to Regina, Winnipeg and Edmonton.

The birds are shipped in double-decked cages with feed and water so that they will not be injured or starved. Usually they are ready to start on the return journey as soon as they are released. One of the most remarkable experiments occurred in 1936 when 23 Cowbirds were trapped and banded in Waukegan, Ill., and shipped to New Orleans, a thousand miles away. In from fourteen to thirty days five of those birds were re-trapped at Waukegan.

Of recent shipments three males returned from Denver, four males from Winnipeg and three males from Edmonton. Of 30 birds sent to Edmonton, nine died enroute. This unusual mortality was due to a shortage of water, as evidenced by empty drinking cups. Some of the survivors seemed too weak to fly. The fact that three made the return journey is, therefore, especially remarkable.

Out of the Regina shipment, only one died. The 29 remaining birds were reported in good condition, but, up to June 8, none had returned.

Incidentally, Mr. Lyon has learned from Mr. J. P. Kennedy of Winnipeg, that a Cowbird banded there May 23, 1933 was shot at Guadalajara, Mexico, November 23, 1933, having travelled more than 2000 miles.

(from Inland Bird Banding News)

Largest American Wild Fowl May Yet Survive

Trumpeter swans, largest North American wild fowl, once considered on the road to extinction, may yet be perpetuated.

This summer's census revealed at least 158 birds in the United States, an increase of 43 from last year, or more than 37 per cent.

Ninety of the birds were counted on or near the Red Rocks Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, administered by the Biological Survey in southwestern Montana; the other 68 were seen by naturalists of the Department of the Interior during a simultaneous census in and about Yellowstone National Park.

Great hope is seen in the fact that the count this year included 77 cygnets, or young swans, as compared with only 41 last year. Apparently most of the birds that are not breeding birds use the Red Rocks Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. These two nearby areas on which the birds are protected and between which they migrate give hope that the threatened extermination of the trumpeter swan may yet be averted. They are found nesting in no other region in this country.

SAINT : LOUIS : BIRD : CLUB : BULLETIN

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Price \$1.00 a year in advance. Free to
paid-up members of the Club. Subscrip-
tion begins with the January number:

CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT.....Mr. Roland A. Dede
Vice-president.....Mr. Wayne Short
Treasurer.....Mr. Thos. D. Miller
Director.....Miss L. R. Ernst
Director.....Mr. Sterling P. Jones
Secretary.....Miss Anne Loftus
5774 De Giverville Ave., St. Louis

The January Meeting

The January meeting centered its attention on the election of officers with the above results.

Motion pictures of birdbanding were shown and a general discussion of the club programs and policies followed. The meeting was the most enthusiastic one the club has had in years.

Miss Anne Loftus reported the dues were coming in rapidly and that a healthy condition existed in the treasury with 416 dollars in savings account and 65 dollars in checking account.

Dues Now Payable

The club membership starts with the new year. Those who have not sent in their dues are now in arrears. Please remit same to the secretary.

Membership

Any person in sympathy with the purpose of this Club is eligible to membership, and may be admitted on payment of dues to any of the following classes of membership: Active \$1.00, Sustaining \$5.00, Life \$50.00, Patron \$200.00.

The purpose of this Club shall be to promote bird enjoyment, bird study and bird conservation...ornithology in its broadest sense...among the people of St. Louis and vicinity.

News Wanted

The bulletin will carry all news sent in by members of the club which pertain to the purpose of the club.

Members of the club may also use the bulletin, without cost, or listing books, field glasses, cameras, etc. which they have for sale or exchange.

Every member is invited to submit copy on any phases of ornithology, also personal notes concerning the ornithological activities of our members and of any other bird students on or before the last day of the month preceding the issue in which you believe your contribution might most appropriately appear.

It is a desire to have the Bulletin a Club and not a one-man affair. Your help will be appreciated.

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Forest Park offers the people of St. Louis cultural and recreational advantages such as the citizens of few other cities enjoy. The Art Museum, the Zoo, and the Jewel Box are outstanding in this respect.

We bird enthusiasts find another opportunity in the park. In the winter we find it the home of quite a few of our permanent and winter resident birds. In the spring and autumn its wooded areas and calm lagoons cause many of the migrating birds to stop a while and let us observe them. And in the summer large numbers of our resident birds make their nests in the more sheltered and unvisited sections of the park.

There are two things we as a Bird Club can do with respect to Forest Park. We can make an accurate census of the birds to be found in this area, and we can use the detailed knowledge gained thereby to promote Forest Park as a better bird sanctuary.

A carefully complete census of the birds to be found in the four square miles of the park is no easy thing and requires united effort. Some of our members already have acquired valuable personal notes and private records. Our spring bird walks have added much to our knowledge. Many observations have been made and recorded of the nesting birds in the area. Our knowledge will increase with further study. All this varied material could be collected and edited by one or the other of our many active members and the figures given whole-some publicity in our Bulletin and elsewhere.

The results thus obtained would perhaps be quite surprising to most of us. The prediction can safely be made that the census would show more different species, transient as well as nesting, in Forest Park than we suspect.

However, an area the size of Forest Park could easily support ten times the bird population it does at present. This should be one of the constant aims and efforts of the Bird Club - to increase the bird population in Forest Park.

The benefits of such a policy on the part of our Bird Club are obvious. Birds will gradually increase in the park. More birds will nest there. Interest in birds will be stimulated in the St. Louis area. Our Bird Club itself will gain new inspiration from a successful solution of the problem.

!!! MORE BIRDS IN FOREST PARK !!!

Good News

The Hadley Vocational School has again consented to do the stencil and mimeograph work for the Bulletin. For the past year this has been quite a problem for the club. It has been up to a few members to do the work since the club is not able to pay for having the work done. The dues which we pay just about take care of materials and postage.

The Jewish Nurses' Home has again given the club permission to hold our meetings there. We are very fortunate in getting such a fine place to meet each month.

We have been holding our meetings lately at the Soldan High School but the room there was small and parking was a problem near the school.

The Nurses' Home has a large well lighted room with plenty of parking space near by.

Recent Literature

Audubon's Birds

The Birds of America by John James Audubon. Here we find five hundred of Audubon's bird paintings reproduced on a twelve-by-nine inch page. Of these 435 were originally published by Audubon in London between 1827 and 1838, and the remaining 65 were brought out later in New York. Reproductions were made from what is believed to be the finest uncut set of the original "Elephant Folio" plates in America. These were loaned to the publishers for this book.

Appropriately, a fine introduction to the volume has been written by William Vogt of the National Association of Audubon Societies. In this Mr. Vogt pays tribute to the genius of Audubon, and provides helpful suggestions to the bird lover, particularly the beginner among bird students. In addition to the introductory paragraphs, Mr. Vogt has supplied concise legends for each picture, covering in these the range, habitat, identification, nesting, and food of the birds pictured. Besides an index to the common names of the birds a further appendix recites the circumstances under which the original plates were published and includes a transcript of the legends Audubon supplied for these originals. The price of \$12.50 seems exceedingly low for a volume so profuse in reproduction.

"The Animal Kingdom" and "The Bird Kingdom"

Intimate views of the life of various animals and birds are presented in the pictures in these two books. The animals and birds are shown just as they live amid their natural habitats.

The pictures shown in these two books are reproductions of the group famous for their beauty and scientific accuracy which are on exhibit at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

On the left-hand pages of these books appear black and white photographs. On the right-hand pages will be found pictures of the same group in colors. These colored pictures when viewed through the Ortho-scope (which accompanies each book) appear to be in three dimensions. Attractively bound and priced at \$1.00.

Michigan Birds

An attractive illustrated pamphlet entitled An Introduction to the Birds of Michigan by Frank L. Du Mond, is available from the Michigan Audubon Society, Grand Rapids, for twenty five cents.

Methods of bird study are suggested, and a working list of Michigan's bird residents and visitors is included.

Introduced Birds

Do you know what birds besides the Starling and English Sparrow have been introduced into North America, by man?

The following is the complete list taken from the A.O.U. Check-list

Perdix perdix perdix-----European Partridge
 Phasianus colchicus-----Ring-necked Pheasant
 Columba livia livia-----Rock Dove
 Spilopelice chinensis chinensis---Chinese Spotted Dove
 Streptopelice risoria-----Ringed Turtle Dove
 Alauda arvensis arvensis-----Skylark
 Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris-----Starling
 Passer domesticus domesticus-----English Sparrow
 Passer montanus montanus-----European Tree Sparrow
 Carduelis carduelis britannica----British Goldfinch
 Aethiopsar cristatellus cristatellus--Crested Mynah

Are these birds extinct in Missouri? Do you still find the Tree Sparrow, European Tree Sparrow or Barn Owl in our State?

Our only reports of the European Tree Sparrow come from Horseshoe Lake, Ill. Lets have a round up of this bird in Missouri. Any one who knows where they can be found is asked to send this information to the club.

Reports of the first Robin were in the newspapers last month. Large flocks of robins have been with us all year but some of us have not ventured out to look for birds except on those warm spring days in January and when we saw a Robin we thought it had just returned from its southern home.

Now is the time to prepare your nest boxes and put them up. On warm days the birds are out looking for their summer nesting places. The Purple Martins return about the 20 of March and their boxes should be up when they arrive if you expect to have some at your place.

Plans for National Wildlife Restoration Week, Starting March 20 was the highlight of The Third Annual North American Wildlife Conference which met at Baltimore Md. Feb. 14-17

Forest Service To Set Aside Areas For Protection of Vanishing Wild-Life Species.

By an amendment to the National Forest regulations promulgated by Secretary of Agriculture H. A. Wallace, the Forest Service is authorized to designate "Vanishing Species Areas" within the National Forests, wherein wild-life species threatened with extinction or rare plant species will be protected, the United States Department of Agriculture announces.

The amendment to the regulation provides that Forest Service officers may prevent entry of anyone not properly authorized to "any area which has been closed by the Chief, Forest Service, for the perpetuation and protection of (a) rare or vanishing plants or animals, or (b) special biological communities, or (c) historical or archeological places or objects of interest."
